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A “Call-to-Action” For All Californians Will Benefit Pacific Ocean

“Thank You Ocean,” Campaign to Encourage Protection Now and for Future Generations

Long Beach, Calif. – Empowering Californians to protect the Pacific is the focus of a “call-to action” campaign announced today at the California and the World Ocean ‘06 conference. “Thank You Ocean,” a statewide public awareness and information outreach effort, is being launched by the California Resources Agency and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA). The campaign is designed to spur citizen involvement and activity to help protect the ocean’s health and resources.

California Secretary for Resources Mike Chrisman and retired Navy Vice Adm. Conrad C. Lautenbacher, Jr., Ph.D., under secretary of commerce for oceans and atmosphere and NOAA administrator officially launched the campaign and unveiled the Thank You Ocean public service announcement during the opening session of California and the World Ocean '06 conference in Long Beach. A phrase from the announcement explains the campaign concept: “The ocean takes care of us. Let’s return the favor.”

“The ocean has provided California with exceptional natural resources and is vital to our well-being and our economy,” said Chrisman. “We want all Californians to learn about how the ocean affects us, and what we all can do to ensure its health today for our generation and for generations that will follow in our footsteps.”

Recent studies have brought the potential of deteriorating ocean health to the attention of the public. Action 7 of California’s Ocean Action Plan released by Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger in 2004, specifically calls for California to launch an ocean and coastal stewardship media campaign to increase awareness about ocean issues. California’s Ocean Protection Council was formed to address such needs, and supports the Thank You Ocean campaign. The U.S. Ocean Action Plan also calls for increased public awareness, a national priority for NOAA and for NOAA’s National Marine Sanctuary Program, with four national marine sanctuaries in California.

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“California is a leader in addressing ocean issues,” said Lautenbacher. “NOAA is pleased to be a partner in this groundbreaking campaign. Californians are leading the way in learning about the ocean, changing behaviors to benefit our coast and ocean and getting involved in ocean issues. This is a great example of how cooperative conservation can be applied in public awareness campaigns.”

The campaign Web site, <http://www.thankyouocean.org>, lists five things Californians can do to thank the ocean.

- Learn about the ocean: visit the campaign’s Web site, a library or aquarium.
- Experience the ocean: swim, sunbathe, surf, boat, dive, fish, play or just sit and contemplate. To know our ocean is to love it, and to love the ocean is to protect it.
- Respect the ocean: take care where you step, don’t disturb sealife that live on land, water or air.
- Choose the ocean: Everyday choices can help—or hurt—our ocean’s health. Recycle, conserve water and remember that everything ends up in the ocean, so don’t litter.
- Make a difference: participate in a beach cleanup, write your lawmakers or join an ocean organization. You can make a difference!

Beginning in October, California’s “Thank You Ocean” campaign ads will appear on outdoor placements in four markets, Los Angeles, San Diego, San Francisco and Sacramento. In December, television PSAs will begin and be broadcast on stations in six markets; Los Angeles, San Diego, Monterey, San Francisco, Sacramento and Eureka. A development plan is currently under way for ongoing campaign funding.

The Thank You Ocean campaign is organized by the California Resources Agency and NOAA’s National Marine Sanctuary Program, who partnered in the design and execution of the campaign. The campaign is supported by the Ocean Communicators Alliance, a group of more than 100 ocean-related organizations, agencies and businesses in California. The Ocean Communicators Alliance was formed from a series of workshops that brought together ocean communication professionals in California who reach millions of Californians daily.

The campaign is co-chaired by Resources Agency Assistant Secretary for Ocean and Coastal Policy Brian Baird and Matt Stout, communications branch chief, NOAA National Marine Sanctuary Program.

Campaign ads, billboards and public service announcements were created by The Hive Advertising of San Francisco. Thankyouocean.org Web site design is by The Ocean Channel. The PSA is directed by award-winning cinematographer and ocean photographer, Bob Talbot. For more information, visit www.thankyouocean.org.

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